

**COMMENTS ON “A NEW SPECIES OF GENUS *THOMISUS* WALCKENAER, 1805 (ARANEAE: THOMISIDAE) FROM TELANGANA, INDIA AND A DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF *THOMISUS PROJECTUS* TIKADER, 1960” BY PRAVALIKHA & SRINIVASULU, 2015**

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Pravalikha & Srinivasulu (2015) described *Thomisus telanganaensis* based on female holotype and one female paratype. Further, the publication also detailed female description of *Thomisus projectus* Tikader, 1960 based on a single specimen from Secunderabad, Telangana, India. However, there are some evident lacunae as discussed below.

**Comments on *Thomisus telanganaensis***

It is agreeable that intraspecific variation exists in the genus *Thomisus*, however it is restricted to variation in body coloration or markings, but not variable in eye position and eye size. Ono (1988) detailed intraspecific variation only after examining concerned types and numerous additional specimens of both sexes. In case of Pravalikha & Srinivasulu (2015), new species was described based on only two female specimens. Both of these are distinctly different species as seen from their epigynal structure (Image 4, Fig. 1) and eye size and position (Images 2C, 3C). Comments on intraspecific variation were based on just these two specimens. Moreover, Image 3C is stretched vertically which has changed the aspect ratio. It is really difficult to judge whether the holotype of *T. telanganaensis* is a new species to science or an already described species in the past, as many *Thomisus* species from oriental region

have remained unstudied since their original description and need revision.

**Comments on *Thomisus projectus***

Poorly described species signify the need for redescription. Also, the World Spider Catalog (2015) does not consider checklists as valid taxonomic records. Yet, distribution section of *Thomisus projectus*, refers checklists records of Gajbe (2003), Chetia & Kalita (2012a,b) and Lawania et al. (2013), which do not provide any taxonomically verifiable information. Chetia & Kalita (2012a,b) and Lawania et al. (2013) have typographical errors in the species names. Further, Chetia & Kalita (2012a,b) published same article in multiple journals - Indian Journal of Arachnology (March 2012) and Asian Journal of Conservation Biology (July 2012), again indicating a dubious publication. Given the current records, it is impossible to comment on endemic nature of this species. The fact is that the only known distributional records of *T. projectus* are from India.

Pravalikha & Srinivasulu (2015) state that *T. projectus* lacks proper description. Therefore, it is questionable that how authors could identify their species as *T. projectus* without comparison with Tikader's type. It would have been helpful even if fresh topotype material was studied. Additionally, detailed description based on singleton (especially in case of known intraspecific variation (Ono 1988)) is not good for taxonomy. The diagnosis section states that the species 'differs with respect to the pattern on the abdomen and epigyne structure' to its closely related species. The details of this difference are not understandable for the reader. It is quite obvious that a confident diagnosis could not be built, as the authors rightly state that genus *Thomisus* needs revision.



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